Important Coins of the Islamic World

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at 2.00 pm

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Lots 11 and 12 *(front);* Lot 41 *(back);* Lot 67 *(inside front cover);* Lot 80 *(inside back cover)*

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45 Maddox Street, London W1S 2PE
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Order of Sale

Monday 4 April 2011

Starting at 2.00 pm

Important Coins of the Islamic World lots 1-81

‡ **Lots marked with a double dagger** are sold under Temporary Import regulations (see Important Information for Buyers).

The condition of most of the coins and medals in this catalogue is described by the use of conventional numismatic terms. For an explanation of these expressions or for any further information, clients are invited to contact us directly.

1
ARAB-SASANIAN, TEMP. MUHAMMAD B. MARWAN, IN THE NAME OF HORMAZD IV
Drachm or 'zuzun', possibly Barda`a or al-Bab, *circa* 73-74h

OBVERSE: Bust of Hormazd IV to right, name in Pahlawi before, AFZWT behind
In margin, divided by star-and-crescent symbols: *bism allah la / illah ila allah wa- / hdahu muhammad / rasul allah*
REVERSE: Fire-altar with attendants, ZWZWN (Aramaic for 'drachm') to right, ŠTA ('six') to left
In margin (plain, without star-and-crescent symbols): *rabbi allah*
WEIGHT: 3.02g
REFERENCES: Walker 1941, p.24, I.12; Sears 2
CONDITION: *Weak in parts, otherwise good very fine, extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £7,000-10,000

NOTE: Apart from a few early coins which imitate drachms of Yazdgird III, the great majority of Arab-Sasanian drachms take the coinage of Khusraw II as their prototypes. This is an extremely rare example of the only known type copying an issue of Hormazd IV, whose distinctive portrait and Pahlawi name are clear on this specimen.

The reverse of the coin bears the Pahlawi word ZWZWN, meaning 'drachm', where the mint-name is normally placed. This and the reduced weight standard connects this type with other rare issues struck in the Umayyad North during the governorship of Muhammad b. Marwan, brother of the caliph.

2
ARAB-SASANIAN, Al-HAKAM B. ABI'L-`AS (fl. 54-58h)
Drachm, ANWAT 56h

OBVERSE: In first and second marginal quadrants: *bism | Allah rabb al-hukm*
WEIGHT: 3.92g
REFERENCE: *Silver Hoard* 88A ('Inedited, perhaps unique')
CONDITION: *Minor peripheral staining, good very fine and extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £800-1,200

3
ARAB-SASANIAN, BISHR B. MARWAN (fl. 71-75h)
Drachm, AKWLA (al-Kufa) 74h

OBVERSE: In second and third marginal quadrants: *bism Allah Muhammad / rasul Allah*
REVERSE: Standing figure of caliph *orans,* flanked by attendants. Date written in Pahlawi numerals. Additional Pahlawi inscription in first marginal quadrant, possibly Y YWSFAN ('Ibn Yusuf')
WEIGHT: 3.73g
CONDITION: *Very fine or better with light grey toning, apparently an unpublished variety*

ESTIMATE: £6,000-8,000

NOTE: The types and legends on this variety are generally similar to published examples of this type (cf Treadwell A5-A8), but the additional Pahlawi word on the reverse margin does not appear to be recorded. If correctly read, this would presumably refer to the governor al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf, appointed governor of Iraq in this year. The practice of acknowledging a subordinate governor in the reverse margin is also found on certain coins of al-Hajjaj himself, also naming al-Bara` b. Qabisa (see lot 7).

4
ARAB-SASANIAN, BISHR B. MARWAN (fl. 71-75h)
Drachm, BCRA (al-Basra) 75h

OBVERSE: In second and third marginal quadrants: *bism Allah Muhammad / rasul Allah*
REVERSE: Standing figure of caliph *orans,* flanked by attendants, pellets to left and right of waist and below feet. Date written in Pahlawi words: PNJHPTAT
WEIGHT: 3.56g
REFERENCE: SE 130; Treadwell B4-B8
CONDITION: *Good fine and very rare*

ESTIMATE: £4,000-5,000

5
ARAB-SASANIAN, AL-QATARI B. AL-FUJA`A
Drachm, DA (Darabjird) 76h

OBVERSE: In margin: *la hukm illa lillah*
WEIGHT: 3.86g
REFERENCE: SCC 166
CONDITION: *Minor deposit, about extremely fine, extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £1,000-1,500

6
ARAB-SASANIAN, ANONYMOUS, KHARIJITE TYPE
Drachm, ART (Ardashir Khurra) 75h

OBVERSE: Pahlavi legend LWYTW DATWBR / BLA YYZTW (There is no judgment except God's) in place of governor's name
WEIGHT: 2.95g
REFERENCES: Walker 1941, p.123, T.18; Gaube 116; SCC 156; Album 34 RRR
CONDITION: *Clipped, cleaned with some deposit remaining on reverse, very fine and very rare*

ESTIMATE: £1,000-1,200

7
ARAB-SASANIAN, Al-BARA` B. QABISA (fl. 76h)
Drachm, Jayy 76h

OBVERSE: Before bust: *al-Hajjaj bin | Yusuf*
In margin, arranged radially: *bism | Allah | la i- | laha i- | lla | Allah wa- | hdahu | Muhammad | rasu- | l A- | llah*
REVERSE: In field, to right and left of fire-altar and attendants: *Jayy | sitt wa sab`ain*
In first and second marginal quadrants: *duriba al-Bara` bin | Qabisa*
WEIGHT: 3.80g
REFERENCES: SCC 159; Album J37 RRR
CONDITION: *Traces of mounting above bust, otherwise very fine and extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £3,000-4,000

NOTE: Al-Bara` b. Qabisa al-Thaqafi was appointed governor of Isbahan in 76h, and is only attested on drachms struck at Jayy in this year. Al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf was his overlord and also a relative.

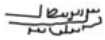
8
ARAB-SASANIAN, AL-HAJJAJ B. YUSUF (75-95h)
Drachm, TART (Tawwaj) 77h

OBVERSE: Before bust: *al-Hajjaj bin | Yusuf*
In margin: *bism Allah | la i-laha i-lla | Allah wahdahu Muhammad | rasul Allah*
written normally from right to left, but the *lam-alifs* are aligned horizontally
WEIGHT: 4.05g
CONDITION: *Light traces of chloride deposit in periphery on obverse, otherwise extremely fine and very rare*

ESTIMATE: £1,200-1,500

NOTE: This variety appears to be unpublished. Early drachms of al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf have the obverse marginal legend written radially (as on the coin of al-Bara` b. Qabisa above), but his later coins revert to the standard format used on previous issues. This appears to be a transitional type, employing the horizontal *lam-alifs* used on al-Hajjaj's earlier coins in conjunction with normal Arabic script running from right to left.

9
ARAB-SASANIAN, ABU SA`ID (?) B. NUMAYLA (?) (fl. 77h)
Drachm, WYHC (Arrajan) 77h

OBVERSE: 
In margin: *Abu Nasr billah*
WEIGHT: 2.63g
CONDITION: *Cleaned, some deposit, otherwise good very fine and of the highest rarity*

ESTIMATE: £3,000-5,000

NOTE: Apparently an unrecorded governor for the series. The proposed reading, Abu Sa`id b. Numayla, is not certain and nobody by this name has so far been traced in the historical sources. However, the initial APW and the final T on the first line are clear and the patronymic appears to end –LAN. Drachms of a certain Numayla b. Malik are known from this mint bearing the date 73h, and Abu Sa`id might have been his son.

10
ARAB-SASANIAN, SA`ID OR `UMAR
Drachm, without mint or date

OBVERSE: In field: normal Sasanian-style bust to right, *Sa`id | bin […]* before
In second and third marginal quadrants: *bism allah la ilaha | illa Allah wahdahu*
REVERSE: In field: fire-altar with attendants; to left: *sa`* (sic); to right: *`Umar*
WEIGHT: 1.82g
CONDITION: *Corroded, fair to fine, believed unpublished*
ESTIMATE: £2,000-3,000

NOTE: The name of Sa`id, apparently accompanied by a patronymic which has not yet been securely read, appears on the obverse in the standard place for a governor's name. On the reverse, the place of the date is taken by what appears to be a blundered Arabic numeral (possibly intended for *saba`* or *saba`in)* and, instead of a mint-signature, there appears the clearly-written proper name *`Umar*.

TWO HIGHLY IMPORTANT DINARS FROM THE 'MINE OF THE COMMANDER OF THE FAITHFUL'

11
UMAYYAD, TEMP. AL-WALID I (86-96h)
Dinar, Ma`din Amir al-Mu`minin 92h

OBVERSE: In field: *la ilaha illa | Allah wahdahu | la sharik lahu | Ma`din Amir | al-Mu`minin*
WEIGHT: 4.27g
REFERENCES: SICA 10: 487; cf SICA 2: 91 *(a standard Umayyad dinar struck from the same reverse die)*
CONDITION: *Minor marks on obverse, extremely fine, extremely rare and historically important*

ESTIMATE: £250,000-300,000

‡12
UMAYYAD, TEMP. YAZID (101-105h) OR HISHAM (105-125h)
Dinar, Ma`din Amir al-Mu`minin bi'l-Hijaz 105h

REVERSE: In field: *Allah ahad Allah | al-samad lam yalid | wa lam yulad Ma`din | Amir al-Mu`minin | bi'l-Hijaz*
WEIGHT: 4.28g
REFERENCES: Walker 1956: ANS.16 = Miles 1950: 66; Khalili Collection AV1032 *(same reverse die)*
CONDITION: *Extremely fine, extremely rare and historically important; the first example of this type to appear at public auction*

ESTIMATE: £300,000-400,000

Lot 11

Lot 12

RARE, INTRIGUING, AND OF GREAT HISTORICAL INTEREST, dinars from the 'Mine of the Commander of the Faithful' are among the most highly prized of all Islamic gold coins. Until now, only one example, dated 92h, has previously appeared in public auction (Turath 1999: lot 8, sold for £308,000).

Dinars from the 'Mine of the Commander of the Faithful' fall into two groups and the two specimens offered here represent an example of each type.

The first group comprises coins dated 91h and 92h; a similar example dated 89h has been reported but has not been published. Coins of this type have the additional words *Ma`din Amir al-Mu`minin* squeezed in below the *kalima* in the *obverse* field. Approximately eight examples of both dates are reliably reported, including lot 11 offered here.

Coins of the second group, dated 105h, carry the longer text *Ma`din Amir al-Mu`minin bi'l-Hijaz* in the *reverse* field (a specimen dated 106h is also rumoured to exist but remains unpublished). Some ten or eleven specimens of this type, including lot 12 offered here, are reliably attested. Almost all of these are now held in institutional collections. The type is of particular significance in that it is the first Islamic coin to mention a location within the present Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The meaning of *Ma`din Amir al-Mu`minin* and *Ma`din Amir al-Mu`minin bi'l-Hijaz* is still debated but there is much to be said for the simplest explanation: that the words refer to a mine belonging to the caliph (Bates 2011; *contra* Shamma 1995 and Ilisch 1996). It would then be logical to identify the mine in the Hijaz named on the dinars of 105h with the *Ma`din Bani Sulaym,* purchased just a few years previously by the caliph `Umar (Miles 1972, p. 266). Miles was able to locate this with considerable accuracy, south-east of Medina and north-west of Mecca. Whether this was the same mine as was mentioned on the coins of 91h and 92h is impossible to say. Miles believed it was, even though these earlier issues lack the identifying *bi'l-Hijaz* (Miles 1972, p. 266).

While the mine itself may have been located in the Hijaz, the coins themselves were surely struck by the Damascus mint, where regular Umayyad dinars were also produced. Strong evidence for this comes from the sharing of dies between the two issues. Miles (1972) noted that dies used to strike regular dinars had been used for the 'normal' side of *Ma`din* coins dated 91h and 105h, and indeed lot 11 in the present sale shares a reverse die with a standard 92h dinar published in SICA. This supports the view that *Ma`din Amir al-Mu`minin* denotes the source of the gold from which the coins were made, and does not indicate the physical location of the mint where they were actually struck. If it were the name of a mint, one might expect *Ma`din Amir al-Mu`minin* to be part of the standard mint/date formula, like Ifriqiya and al-Andalus on other Umayyad dinars.

But why was the source of the gold used to make these coins of such importance? In Bates's words: 'If they were intended for general circulation, there seems little point in identifying them as products of a particular mine. Who would care to know that fact, and why would the caliph care to inform them?' There may be a thoroughly practical answer – to distinguish between state revenues and the caliph's private resources, perhaps? – but another intriguing possibility has also been suggested. Although the *Ma`din* issues were all produced using dies *prepared* in Damascus, it is possible that they may actually have been *struck* elsewhere. Travelling mints were not uncommon in the ancient world, and workers and equipment from Damascus could have accompanied the caliph and established a temporary mint wherever needed. Interestingly, Ilisch (1996) has noted a close connection between the dates on these dinars and the occasions when the caliph himself undertook the pilgrimage. We also know that the *Ma`din Bani Sulaym* was close to a major pilgrim highway - an inscription recording the rebuilding of this road in 304h was found among old mine-workings (Miles 1950).

Might the caliph have taken the opportunity to visit his mine *en route,* either taking gold with him back to Damascus or possibly even setting up a temporary mint there to strike these special coins? If so, then these dinars from the 'Mine of the Commander of the Faithful' would have the further distinction of being among the earliest dated objects relating to the Haj Pilgrimage which survive today.

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‡13
UMAYYAD, TEMP. HISHAM (105-125h)
Dinar, 107h

REVERSE: Two pellets below *y* of *yuladu* in third line of field
WEIGHT: 4.24g
REFERENCE: Walker 1956, 227
CONDITION: *Faint marks on edge, otherwise almost extremely fine and rare, one of the key dates for the series*

ESTIMATE: £5,000-7,000

NOTE: It has been suggested that the rarity of this date may be related to a plague which struck Damascus in this year.

14
UMAYYAD, TEMP. IBRAHIM (126-127h)
Dinar, 127h

WEIGHT: 4.06g
REFERENCE: Walker 1956, 247; Shaker 51 *(same obverse die)*
CONDITION: *Has been claw-mounted in four places, overall contact wear consistent with use in jewellery, almost very fine and very rare*

ESTIMATE: £4,000-5,000

15
UMAYYAD, TEMP. `ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN
Dirham, Abrashahr 80h

REVERSE: Legend in field arranged: *Allah ahad Allah | al-samad lam yalid wa lam | yulad wa lam yakun | lahu kufu'an ahad*
WEIGHT: 2.79g
REFERENCES: Klat 3; SCC -
CONDITION: *Edge chipped, minor deposit, otherwise very fine to good very fine, extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £4,000-5,000

NOTE: One example recorded by Klat. The layout of the reverse field is exceptional; virtually all Umayyad dirhams place the *lam* of *lam yulad* at the beginning of the third line rather than the end of the second as here. This appears to be a peculiarity of early dirhams of this mint and is also found on coins of the preceding year.

16
UMAYYAD, TEMP. AL-WALID I
Dirham, Abrashahr 94h

REVERSE: Marginal legend ends *mushrikn*
WEIGHT: 2.75g
REFERENCES: Klat 8a *(same dies);* SCC 439 *(same dies)*
CONDITION: *Very fine and an extremely rare variety*

ESTIMATE: £1,500-2,000

NOTE: One specimen of this variety recorded by Klat.

17
UMAYYAD, TEMP. `ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN
Dirham, Abarqubadh 80h

WEIGHT: 2.82g
REFERENCES: Klat 16 *(same obverse die);* SCC 237 *(same obverse die)*
CONDITION: *Cleaned, minor graffiti on obverse, very fine and extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £4,000-5,000

NOTE: Two examples recorded by Klat.

18
UMAYYAD, TEMP. `ABD Al-MALIK B. MARWAN
Dirham, Abarqubadh 81h

WEIGHT: 2.88g
REFERENCES: Klat 17 *(same reverse die);* SCC -
CONDITION: *Minor flan split, good very fine*

ESTIMATE: £1,000-1,200

19
UMAYYAD, TEMP. `ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN
Dirham, Abarqubadh 82h

WEIGHT: 2.83g
REFERENCES: Klat 18; SCC 278
CONDITION: *Cleaned, minor peripheral corrosion, otherwise good very fine, very rare*

ESTIMATE: £2,000-2,500

‡20
UMAYYAD, TEMP. AL-WALID I
Dirham, Arran 90h

WEIGHT: 2.77g
REFERENCES: Klat 27; SCC -
CONDITION: *Cleaned, minor scuffs, good very fine and extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £6,000-8,000

NOTE: Three examples recorded by Klat.

21
UMAYYAD, TEMP. HISHAM
Dirham, al-Andalus 121h

WEIGHT: 2.44g
REFERENCES: Klat 134; SCC 735
CONDITION: *Evenly clipped, very fine or better*

ESTIMATE: £1,200-1,500

22
UMAYYAD, TEMP. HISHAM
Dirham, al-Bab 117h

REVERSE: Annulets: o o o o o
WEIGHT: 2.86g
REFERENCES: Klat 144; SCC -
CONDITION: *Very fine, an extremely rare date for the mint*

ESTIMATE: £4,000-6,000

NOTE: Two examples recorded by Klat, both with the annulet pattern in the reverse margin unclear. This specimen confirms Klat's suggestion of five small, evenly-spaced annulets as on coins dated 115h and 118h. No dirhams of al-Bab 116h appear to have been published.

23
UMAYYAD, TEMP. `ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN
Dirham, Bizamqubadh 79h

WEIGHT: 2.83g
REFERENCES: Klat 160; SCC -
CONDITION: *Cleaned, minor peripheral corrosion, otherwise good very fine and extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £8,000-12,000

NOTE: Two examples recorded by Klat. This is the first year of issue for the mint.

The mint-name has normally been identified with Arrajan in western Fars province. According to Album (SICA I, p. 66), Arrajan became known as Veh-az-Amid-Kavad in Sasanian times, when prisoners from Amid were transported *en masse* to Arrajan and resettled there in the early sixth century AD. The mint-name survived as WYHC on Arab-Sasanian drachms, and was converted to the Arabic Bizamqubadh on the post-Reform coinage when Pahlawi was finally abandoned. Recently, Shams Eshragh has proposed the alternative reading Barm Qubadh, noting that the Old Persian word *barm* 'meant a nice place which had springs full of limpid water' (SCC, p.55, note 32).

24
UMAYYAD, TEMP. AL-WALID I
Dirham, Bihqubadh al-Asfal 90h

WEIGHT: 2.62g
REFERENCES: Klat 192; SCC 316
CONDITION *About very fine, rare*

ESTIMATE: £1,500-2,000

25
UMAYYAD, TEMP. `ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN
Dirham, Tawwaj 82h

WEIGHT: 1.82g
REFERENCES: Klat 199; SCC -; cf Islamic Coin Auction 3, 10 October 2001, lot 56 *(same reverse die)*
CONDITION: *Cleaned, has been clipped in the past, only fair to fine but extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £10,000-15,000

26
UMAYYAD, TEMP. `ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN
Dirham, al-Jazira 81h

WEIGHT: 2.53g
CONDITION: *Edge chipped, minor corrosion, otherwise good very fine and of the highest rarity*

ESTIMATE: £15,000-20,000

NOTE: This hitherto unpublished coin becomes the earliest post-Reform dirham known from the mint of al-Jazira. Klat records a single specimen struck in the following year (Klat 218), and there are several interesting differences in calligraphy and layout between the two. On the present coin, the obverse marginal legend containing the mint/date formula starts in its more usual position of 12 o'clock, as opposed to 9 o'clock on Klat 218. The *lam-alifs* in the obverse field are also written very differently. Those on this piece have vertical uprights above circular loops, while those on the coin struck in the following year have small, triangular bases and uprights extending 45 degrees either side of the vertical, stylistically closer to later issues of Wasit and the East.

27
UMAYYAD, TEMP. AL-WALID I
Dirham, al-Jazira 95h

WEIGHT: 2.86g
REFERENCES: Klat 220; SCC 485 *(same obverse die)*
CONDITION: *Good very fine, very rare*

ESTIMATE: £3,000-4,000

28
UMAYYAD, TEMP. `ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN
Dirham, al-Jisr 79h

REVERSE: margin ends *al-mushrikin* (as on Klat 230)
WEIGHT: 2.78g
REFERENCES: cf Klat 229; SCC -; cf Spink auction 154, 12 July 2001, lot 559 *(same reverse die)*
CONDITION: *Cleaned, otherwise good very fine, extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £8,000-12,000

NOTE: Two examples recorded by Klat, including the Spink piece referenced above which was damaged and lacked the final part of the reverse marginal legend. This coin confirms that it ends with the unusual variant *al-mushrikin,* with a *ya* before the final letter *nun,* instead of the normal *al-mushrikun* or *al-mushrikn.*

29
UMAYYAD, TEMP. `ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN
Dirham, al-Jisr 80h

WEIGHT: 2.87g
REFERENCES: Klat 230; SCC -
CONDITION: *Very fine*

ESTIMATE: £1,000-1,200

30
UMAYYAD, TEMP. `ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN
Dirham, al-Jisr 81h

WEIGHT: 2.87g
REFERENCES: Klat 231; SCC 265 *(same obverse die)*
CONDITION: *Very fine, rare*

ESTIMATE: £1,000-1,200

31
UMAYYAD, TEMP. `ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN
Dirham, Dabil 84h

WEIGHT: 2.77g
REFERENCES: Klat 285; SCC -
CONDITION: *Very fine and very rare, the earliest date for the mint*

ESTIMATE: £3,000-4,000

NOTE: Four specimens recorded by Klat.

32
UMAYYAD, TEMP. `ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN
Dirham, Dastawa 80h

WEIGHT: 2.79g
REFERENCES: Klat 307 *(same dies);* SCC -
CONDITION: *Some marginal corrosion, good very fine and very rare*

ESTIMATE: £2,500-3,000

NOTE: Four specimens recorded by Klat.

33
UMAYYAD, TEMP. `ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN
Dirham, Dasht Maysan 79h

WEIGHT: 2.77g
REFERENCES: Klat 318 *(same reverse die);* SCC -
CONDITION *Cleaned, peripheral corrosion, very fine to good very fine and very rare*

ESTIMATE: £2,000-2,500

NOTE: Two specimens recorded by Klat.

34
UMAYYAD, TEMP. `ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN
Dirham, al-Rayy 79h

WEIGHT: 2.76g
REFERENCES: Klat 394; SCC -
CONDITION: *Minor obverse graffiti, good very fine and extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £6,000-8,000

NOTE: Two specimens recorded by Klat.

‡35
UMAYYAD, TEMP. AL-WALID I
Dirham, `Uman 90h

OBVERSE: Margin: pellets below *sin* of *sanat* and *sin* of *tis`ain*
WEIGHT: 2.86g
REFERENCES: Klat 500; *Oman* 1:2 *(same reverse die);* SCC -
CONDITION: *Cleaned, otherwise good very fine and extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £20,000-30,000

NOTE: Umayyad dirhams from Oman are the earliest Islamic coins struck in the Arabian peninsula, and also the first dated objects to preserve the name Oman. Only two dates are known: 81h and 90h, and just a few specimens are recorded in total.

At first sight, the calligraphy on this piece is surprising for a coin struck in Oman. By the time that this piece was struck, two distinct regional styles of lettering on Umayyad dirhams had developed. Mints in the East (broadly speaking Iran and Iraq) generally used a more angular style, characterised by *lam-alifs* resembling an X with a closed base. The relatively few dirham mints active in the North and West continued the more rounded style established at Damascus, where the bottom loop of the *lam-alif* is less triangular and the uprights curve up towards the vertical. Interestingly, this dirham is stylistically linked with the Western rather than the Eastern group, in spite of Oman's geographical proximity to Fars and Kirman.

36
UMAYYAD, TEMP. `ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN
Dirham, Fil 80h

WEIGHT: 2.83g
REFERENCES: Klat 515; SCC -
CONDITION: *Good very fine and extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £3,500-4,000

NOTE: Three examples recorded by Klat. This mint-name is conventionally given as Fil although the correct reading is uncertain and may well be different. It was previously thought that the mint-name referred to a town called Fil in Khwarezm but it is now known that this was not under Muslim control at the time. The unpointed Kufic script used on Umayyad dirhams means that while the last letter must be 'l', the first letter could be 'q' or 'm' instead of 'f', and the second 'b', 't', 'th' or 'n' instead of 'y'. Unfortunately, none of these combinations gives a plausible town name, although Album has proposed Qibal, a suburb of Isbahan.

37
UMAYYAD, TEMP. AL-WALID I
Dirham, Qumis 95h

WEIGHT: 2.45g
REFERENCES: Klat 521
CONDITION: *Cleaned, some peripheral corrosion in reverse margin, very fine and very rare*

ESTIMATE: £2,000-3,000

NOTE: Four examples recorded by Klat.

38
UMAYYAD, TEMP. `ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN
Dirham, Mah al-Kufa 81h

WEIGHT: 2.84g
REFERENCES: Klat 555 *(same reverse die);* SCC -
CONDITION: *Very fine and extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £5,000-7,000

NOTE: Three examples recorded by Klat.

39
UMAYYAD, TEMP. AL-WALID I
Dirham, Mazinan 92h

OBVERSE: In margin: pellet above first and last letters of *bi-Mazinan;* pellet below *b* of *bi-* and two pellets below *z* of *Mazinan*
WEIGHT: 2.90g
REFERENCE: Klat 580; SCC -
CONDITION: *About extremely fine, very rare*

ESTIMATE: £5,000-7,000

NOTE: Three examples recorded by Klat. This mint-name has also been read as Marinan, Maziyan, and even as a blundered version of Maysan, but Mazinan – apparently the only reading recorded as a town in the mediaeval sources - is surely correct. Mazinan was located in the province of Khurasan, about 100 miles west of Nishapur and approximately 50 miles from the border with Qumis province. Le Strange only mentions it in passing but records that it was also known as Bahmanabad; presumably, therefore, it was originally a Sasanian foundation.

40
UMAYYAD, TEMP. `ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN
Dirham, Nahr Tira 83h

WEIGHT: 2.68g
REFERENCES: Klat 640 *(same reverse die);* SCC -
CONDITION: *Surfaces partly corroded, otherwise very fine, very rare*

ESTIMATE: £3,000-3,500

NOTE: Three examples recorded by Klat.

Lot 41

41
UMAYYAD, TEMP. AL-WALID I
Dirham, possibly al-Naynuwa or al-Sawa 93h

OBVERSE: Five simple annulets in outer margin
REVERSE: Five simple annulets in outer margin; marginal legend ends *mushrikun*
WEIGHT: 2.64g
CONDITION: *Staining on both sides, flan lamination on reverse, otherwise good very fine and of the highest rarity*

ESTIMATE: £30,000-40,000

NOTE: AN UNPUBLISHED AND HITHERTO UNRECORDED MINT FOR UMAYYAD SILVER

The mint-name on this specimen is written very clearly but has not yet been conclusively identified. Like other Umayyad 'mystery mints', the main difficulty is caused by the unpointed Kufic lettering used on these coins (see note to lot 36 above). A well-known text such as a verse from the Qur`an can usually be identified without much difficulty, but place-names can be much more problematic, particularly when the locations themselves are unfamiliar. It should be borne in mind, however, that what appears ambiguous or confusing today will have caused no such problems at the time; this mint-name may be opaque to modern scholars but will have been easily understood when this coin was issued.

On the present specimen, the first two letters of the mint can only be the definite article 'al-'. These are followed by three 'teeth' of equal height, which could either be a single letter ('s' or 'sh') or three separate letters ('b', 't', 'th', 'n' or 'y'). The word is concluded by a 'w' and either a 'y' or *alif maqsura.* Theoretically, there are dozens of possible ways in which this mint-name could be read, but it seems that only two of these – *al-Sawa* and *al-Naynuwa* – result in place-names mentioned by mediaeval writers.

Al-Sawa is perhaps the reading which fits better with how the mint-name appears on the coin. The three 'teeth' following 'al-' are so regular in height and spacing that they appear to be elements of a single 's' rather than three separate letters. When a word such as *ithnatayn* ('two'), where the letters 'th' – 'n' – 't' – 'n' are written consecutively, appears on an Umayyad dirham, it is very unusual for all four 'teeth' to be the same height as they would be in modern Arabic script. This is clearly deliberate, and may well have been intended to show that each represented a separate letter. Assuming that the three very regular 'teeth' on this coin do indeed form a single 's' or 'sh', the number of possible readings of the mint-name is greatly reduced. Of these, *al-Sawa* is the only version which gives a recorded place-name, although apparently referring to a fort in the Yemen (which would be a most unlikely location for an Umayyad mint). Nevertheless, this does confirm the validity of al-Sawa as an Arabic place-name, and another location by this name may have existed in Umayyad times.

Al-Naynuwa is the ancient Nineveh, abandoned for centuries after its sack in 612BC but resettled in Sasanian times. Nineveh appears to have declined rapidly after the Arab conquests, and it was quickly overtaken in importance by Mosul on the opposite bank of the Tigris; its status at the time this coin was struck is hard to assess. At first sight it is difficult to explain why dirhams should have been issued at Nineveh when the neighbouring town of Mosul was larger, more important (possibly already the regional capital), and established as a mint for post-Reform Umayyad silver. Even so, there may well have been good reasons for a coinage issue in 93h which were then evident but are now obscure, and it is perhaps worth noting that another ancient city, Ctesiphon, makes a brief appearance in the Umayyad dirham coinage under the name of al-Madinat al-`Atiqa in 97h.

42
UMAYYAD, TEMP. `ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN
Dirham, Harat 79h

WEIGHT: 2.43g
REFERENCES: Klat 652.b
CONDITION: *Some die-rust evident on obverse, good very fine and extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £8,000-10,000

43
UMAYYAD, TEMP. `ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN
Dirham, Hamadan 81h

WEIGHT: 2.88g
REFERENCES: Klat 664
CONDITION: *Good very fine, very rare*

ESTIMATE: £2,000-2,500

44
REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD, ABU MUSLIM
Dirham, Balkh 130h

WEIGHT: 2.29g
REFERENCES: Wurtzel 19; Klat 187
CONDITION: *Minor double-striking, very fine, very rare*

ESTIMATE: £1,800-2,200

45
ABBASID, TEMP. AL-MA`MUN (194-218h)
Dinar, San`a 214h

WEIGHT: 4.08g
REFERENCES Lowick -; Album 222A
CONDITION: *Very slightly bent, very fine and extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £1,000-1,200

46
ABBASID, AL-RADI (322-329h)
Dinar, al-Kur [325h]

OBVERSE: In field: ornate, interlocking *lam-alifs,* decorative fleuron below
REVERSE: In field: name of *Muhammad* with elaborate calligraphic decoration
WEIGHT: 3.35g
REFERENCES: Bernardi 285Ko RRR; cf Morton & Eden auction 14, lot 577 *(same dies)*
CONDITION: *Crudely struck with the date mostly flat, fine to good fine and extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £700-1,000

NOTE: Apparently the third known specimen of this extremely rare issue. Apart from a unique Umayyad dirham dated 88h (Klat 536), this is the only appearance of this mint in the numismatic record. The mint-name on this piece is clear, although the date is largely obscured through poor striking (as is also the case on one of the other two known examples). All three dinars were struck from the same pair of dies, which therefore confirms the date on this example as 325h.

47
ABBASID, AL-MUTTAQI (329-333h)
Dinar, Wasit 329h

OBVERSE: In field: citing *Abu'l-Husayn Bajkam | mawla Amir al-Mu`minin*
WEIGHT: 4.03g
REFERENCES: Bernardi 309Jm
CONDITION: *About extremely fine*

ESTIMATE: £1,000-1,500

48
ABBASID, AL-MUSTA`SIM (640-656h)
Dinar, Madinat al-Salam 652h

WEIGHT: 7.69g
REFERENCES: Lavoix 1330
CONDITION *Flan a little ragged, some areas of weak striking in margins, otherwise good very fine and a rare date*

ESTIMATE: £1,000-1,200

NOTE: Apart from the example in Paris described by Lavoix, this date is apparently lacking in other published institutional collections.

AN EXCEPTIONAL GROUP OF ABBASID DIRHAMS STRUCK IN THE HOLY CITY OF MAKKA

49
ABBASID, AL-MUKTAFI (289-295h)
Dirham, Makka 291h

WEIGHT: 2.92g
REFERENCES: SICA X, 489 *(same dies)*
CONDITION: *Small edge chip, about very fine and very rare*

ESTIMATE: £2,000-2,500

50
ABBASID, AL-MUKTAFI
Dirham, Makka 292h

WEIGHT: 2.51g
REFERENCES: SICA X, 490
CONDITION: *Cleaned, with edge chip but very fine and with very clear mint and date, rare*

ESTIMATE: £2,000-3,000

51
ABBASID, AL-MUQTADIR (295-320h)
Dirham, Makka 297h

OBVERSE: Without name of heir in field
WEIGHT: 2.90g
REFERENCES: cf Sotheby's, 14 October 1999, lot 315 *(same reverse die)*
CONDITION: *Lightly toned, very fine with clear mint and date, extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £4,000-5,000

52
ABBASID, AL-MUQTADIR
Dirham, Makka 301h

OBVERSE: With the name of the heir Abu'l-`Abbas in field
WEIGHT: 2.86g
REFERENCES: cf Sotheby's, 20 April 1983, lot 25 *(same dies)*
CONDITION: *Some discolouration, very fine and extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £4,000-5,000

53
ABBASID, AL-MUQTADIR
Dirham, Makka 304h

OBVERSE: With the name of the heir Abu'l-`Abbas in field
WEIGHT: 2.76g
CONDITION: *Centres weak, otherwise very fine and extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £4,000-5,000

NOTE: Believed to be an unpublished date for the mint

54
ABBASID, AL-MUQTADIR
Dirham, `Uman [3]19h

OBVERSE: citing *Abu'l-`Abbas bin | Amir al-Mu`minin*
WEIGHT: 3.03g
CONDITION: *Considerable double-striking, generally fine to good fine*
ESTIMATE: £3,000-5,000

NOTE: Unpublished, and apparently the first recorded example of a purely Abbasid dirham from Oman.

55
ABBASID, AL-MUQTADIR
Donative dirham, without mint or date

OBVERSE AND REVERSE: Hare crouching left, within border of two interlocking squares
Ja`far | al-Muqtadir | billah | al-Imam
WEIGHT: 2.75g
REFERENCES: Ilisch B II 2
CONDITION: *Traces of loop-mount between border and marginal legend, very fine and extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £3,000-4,000

56
ABBASID, AL-MUTI` (334-363h)
Dirham, Madinat Antakya '5' (345h?)

WEIGHT: 5.17g
REFERENCES: cf Stephen Album list 100, September 1993, no. 74 *(same dies)*
CONDITION: *Weak in parts, otherwise very fine and toned, very rare*

ESTIMATE: £800-1,200

57
AGHLABID, ZIYADAT ALLAH I (201-223h)
Dirham, Siqilliya 217h

WEIGHT: 2.70g
REFERENCES: al-`Ush –
CONDITION: *Wavy flan, small edge flaw, fine to good fine and extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £1,000-1,200

58
AGHLABID, ZIYADAT ALLAH II (249-250h)
Dinar, 249h

REVERSE: In field: *Ghalab* above, *Ziyadat Allah* below
WEIGHT: 4.22g
REFERENCES: al-`Ush -; Kazan 267 *(same dies)*
CONDITION: *Very fine or better and extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £1,200-1,500

NOTE: al-`Ush only knew of only one example of a dinar issued by this ruler, dated 250h.

59
TULUNID, JAYSH B. KHUMARAWAYH (282-283h)
Dinar, Misr 283h

OBVERSE: Annulet below field
REVERSE: Letter *ha* below field
WEIGHT: 4.13g
REFERENCES: Grabar 70; Bernardi 214De
CONDITION: *Neatly plugged in two places, otherwise better than very fine and very rare*

ESTIMATE: £2,000-3,000

60
FATIMID, AL-MANSUR (334-341h)
Dinar, al-Mansuriya 340h

WEIGHT: 4.19g
REFERENCES: Nicol 218
CONDITION: *Almost extremely fine and rare*

ESTIMATE: £1,400-1,600

61
FATIMID, AL-MUSTANSIR (427-487h)
Dinar, Tabariya 428h

LEGENDS: as Nicol type A1
WEIGHT: 3.52g
CONDITION: *Pierced in inner border (not affecting legends), two central flan cracks apparently made during striking, otherwise about very fine and apparently unpublished*

ESTIMATE: £1,800-2,200

NOTE: Not only an unpublished date for the mint but also the earliest recorded Tabariya dinar of al-Mustansir.

62
FATIMID, Al-MUSTANSIR
Dinar, Dimashq 441h

WEIGHT: 2.85g
REFERENCES: Nicol 1727
CONDITION: *Some weak striking on obverse, edge smoothed and minor marks and scrapes, very fine to good very fine and rare*

ESTIMATE: £1,500-2,000

63
FATIMID, AL-MUSTANSIR
Dinar, Filistin 444h

WEIGHT: 4.09g
REFERENCES: Nicol 2072
CONDITION: *Traces of mounting on edge, about very fine and rare*

ESTIMATE: £1,000-1,500

64
BUWAYHID, AL-MARZUBAN, AS GOVERNOR OF `UMAN (c.362-372h)
Dinar, `Uman 364h

OBVERSE: citing `Adud al-dawla and Rukn al-dawla as overlords
WEIGHT: 5.63g
REFERENCES: Treadwell Um364G; *Oman* p.134
CONDITION: *Good very fine, very rare*

ESTIMATE: £1,200-1,500

65
GOVERNORS OF `UMAN, AHMAD B. AL-HUSAYN (fl. 289h)
Dirham, `Uman 289h

REVERSE: with the name of the caliph al-Muktafi
WEIGHT: 2.79g
REFERENCES: cf Sotheby's, 14 October 1999, lot 313 *(same dies); Oman* -
CONDITION: *Weak area on each side, otherwise very fine, extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £1,200-1,500

66
BURID OF DAMASCUS, SHIHAB AL-DIN MAHMUD (529-533h)
Dinar, Dimashq 530h

OBVERSE: also citing the Great Seljuq rulers Mas`ud (on inner margin) and Sanjar (on outer margin)
WEIGHT: 4.02g
REFERENCES: cf Album 782
CONDITION: *Edge smoothed and probably once mounted, otherwise about very fine for issue and extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £2,500-3,000

NOTE: Apparently an unrecorded type for this very rare coinage.

67
SELJUQ OF RUM, GHIYATH AL-DIN KAYKHUSRAW II (634-644h)
Dinar, Qunya 638h

OBVERSE:	Radiant sun-face flanked by two lions Upper inscription: *al-imam al-Mustansir billah Amir al-Mu`minin* Lower inscription: *duriba hadha 'l-dinar* (sic) *bi-Qunya*
REVERSE:	In field: *al-sultan al-`azam | Ghiyath al-dunya wa'l-din | Kaykhusraw | bin Kayqubad* In outer segments: *sanat | thaman | thalathin | sitt mi`at*
WEIGHT:	4.47g
REFERENCES:	ANS 1962.126.2 *(same dies)*
CONDITION:	*Small area of weakness in centre of reverse where metal has flowed into the sun-face, extremely fine and retaining some lustre, of the highest rarity*
ESTIMATE:	£50,000-70,000

68
SELJUQ OF RUM, GHIYATH AL-DIN KAYKHUSRAW II
Dinar, Dar al-Mulk Qunya 642h

OBVERSE: In margin: citing the `Abbasid caliph *al-Musta`sim billah*
REVERSE: In field: naming the Sultan as *Ghiyath al-dunya wa'l-din Kaykhusraw bin Kayqubad*
WEIGHT: 4.24g
REFERENCES: Hinrichs 660
CONDITION: *Minor weakness in striking, practically uncirculated*

ESTIMATE: £1,800-2,200

69
SELJUQ OF RUM, `IZZ AL-DIN KAYKA'US (644-647h)
Dinar, Dar al-Mulk Qunya 644h

OBVERSE: In margin: citing the `Abbasid caliph *al-Musta`sim billah*
REVERSE: In field: naming the Sultan as *`Izz al-dunya wa'l-din Abu'l-Fath Kaykawus bin Kaykhusraw*
WEIGHT: 4.38g
REFERENCES: Artuk 1121
CONDITION: *Tiny edge cut, virtually uncirculated*

ESTIMATE: £1,800-2,200

NOTE: The mint-name and last two digits of the date are slightly abbreviated on this type.

70
SELJUQ OF RUM, THE THREE BROTHERS (647-657h)
Dinar, Qunya 648h

OBVERSE: naming the Abbasid caliph *al-Musta`sim billah,* mint and date below
REVERSE: naming the three brothers as *`Izz al-dunya wa'l-din Kayka`us wa Rukn al-dunya wa'l-din Qilij Arslan wa `Ala al-dunya wa'l-din Kayqubad bin* (sic) *Kaykhusraw*
WEIGHT: 4.24g
REFERENCE: Hinrichs 660
CONDITION: *Minor weakness in striking, almost uncirculated*

ESTIMATE: £1,800-2,200

‡71
SELJUQ OF RUM, KAYKHUSRAW III (663-682h)
Dinar, Madinat Siwas 668h

REVERSE: naming the Sultan as *Ghiyath al-dunya wa'l-din Kaykhusraw bin Qilij Arslan*
WEIGHT: 4.38g
REFERENCE: Album A1232
CONDITION: *Wavy flan, extremely fine and extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £3,000-4,000

72
SAFFARID, TAHIR B. MUHAMMAD
Dirham, `Uman 294h

WEIGHT: 3.18g
REFERENCES: Qatar III, 3630 = Sotheby's, 27 May 1999, lot 189 *(same obverse die);* Tübingen EA4B6 = *Oman* p.129
CONDITION: *Minor weakness in margins, very fine and very rare*

ESTIMATE: £1,000-1,500

73
SAJID, YUSUF B. DIWDAD (288-315h)
Donative dirham with broad margins, Ardabil 305h

REVERSE: In field: *Lillah | Muhammad | rasul Allah | al-Muqtadir billah | Yusuf bin Diwdad*
WEIGHT: 3.00g
CONDITION: *Flan slightly buckled, very fine or better and very rare*

ESTIMATE: £1,000-1,500

NOTE: Donative coins struck at more distant locations are much rarer than those produced at the caliph's court.

74
GHAZNAVID, MAHMUD (388-421h)
Copper Fals, Bust 402h

OBVERSE: Margin: *bismillah al-rahman al-rahim Muhammad rasul Allah duriba hadha al-fals bi-Bust sanat ithnayn wa arba` mi`at*
Field: *`adl | la ilaha illa | Allah wahdahu | la sharik lahu*
REVERSE: Outer margin: *lillah al-amr…* (Qur`an xxx, 4-5)
Inner margin: *al-rahman […] | al-rahim al-a[…] | wa […] | wa al-samir*
Limbs of cross: *Muhammad | rasu - || l Allah | al-Qadir || billah | Yamin || al-da- | wla*
Centre of cross: *Abu'l-Qasim | Mahmud*
WEIGHT: 5.79g
REFERENCE: Album 1614
CONDITION: *Patches of light green deposit, otherwise good very fine and very rare*

ESTIMATE: £1,200-1,500

75
GREAT SELJUQ, MALIKSHAH (465-485h)
Dinar, Isbahan 483h

OBVERSE: *la ilaha illa Allah | wahdahu la sharik lahu | al-Muqtadi bi-amr Allah | al-sultan al-mu`azzam | Rukn al-Islam | Mu`izz al-Din | Malikshah*
REVERSE: In nine lines, the entire *Ayat al-Kursi* with the final words to left and right (Qur`an ii, 255)
WEIGHT: 2.77g
REFERENCE: cf Sotheby's, 21 November 1985, lot 447 *(same obverse die)*
CONDITION: *Flan slightly crinkled, some weakness in reverse margin but good very fine and evenly struck for the type, rare*

ESTIMATE: £1,200-1,500

76
ILKHANID, ARPA KHAN (736h)
Dinar, Tabriz 736h

LEGENDS: as Diler 686
WEIGHT: 8.64g
CONDITION: *Edge filed, otherwise good very fine and extremely rare, apparently unpublished*

ESTIMATE: £2,000-3,000

NOTE: Diler lists only Bazar as a gold mint for Arpa Khan.

77
ILKHANID, ARPA KHAN (736h)
Dinar, Baghdad 736h

LEGENDS: as Diler 686
WEIGHT: 2.19g
CONDITION: *Pierced, flan slightly wavy, otherwise almost extremely fine and extremely rare, apparently unpublished*

ESTIMATE: £1,500-2,000

78
ILKHANID, MUSA KHAN (736-737h)
Dinar, Tabriz 736h

WEIGHT: 7.97g
REFERENCE: Diler 690 = Sotheby's, 2 October 1986, lot 924
CONDITION: *Good very fine and extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £2,000-3,000

79
CHAGHATAYID, TEMP. CHAGHATAY (624-639h)
Dinar, Almaligh 635h

OBVERSE: In field: *Almaligh | la ilah illah | allah Muhammad | rasul allah | al-Nasir li-din | allah*
REVERSE: In field: *qa`an | al-imam al-a- | `zam al-Nasir | li-din allah a- | mir al-mu`minin*
WEIGHT: 4.53g
REFERENCES: cf Xinjiang 130 [legends identical but date unclear]; cf SNAT XVb:78 [dated 637h and without the name of al-Nasir on the obverse]; see note to Album 1979
CONDITION: *Reverse weakly struck, otherwise very fine with clear mint and date, extremely rare*

ESTIMATE: £2,500-3,000

80
QAJAR, FATH `ALI SHAH (1212-1250h)
Silver Pattern Kran, without mint or date

OBVERSE: Crowned and supported arms, small letter B below
REVERSE: Name and titles of Fath `Ali Shah
WEIGHT: 6.85g
REFERENCE: Rabino 573
CONDITION: *Rich purple-grey toning with some darker patches, good extremely fine and rare*

ESTIMATE: £1,000-1,500

81
QAJAR, MUHAMMAD `ALI SHAH
Gold Medal for the Bombardment of the Majles, 1326h

OBVERSE: Uniformed bust of Muhammad `Ali Shah three-quarters left, crossed rifles and flags to right and left, bugle, sabre, dagger, drum, crossed cannons and crossed shells below
REVERSE: Lion and sun within oak and laurel wreath
WEIGHT: 43.49g (including suspension loop)
REFERENCE: Rabino 75
CONDITION: *With gold suspension loop, scattered marks on obverse, scratched and more severely marked on reverse, otherwise good very fine and of the highest rarity in gold*

ESTIMATE: £20,000-30,000

NOTE: The Bombardment of the Majles was a key event in the turbulent years of the Constitutional Revolution in Persia. Established by popular demand in 1906/1323h - with the somewhat reluctant approval of Muzaffar al-din Shah - the *Majles* was an elected national assembly with powers over the country's laws, budget and financial policy. The new body faced difficulties from the outset: the country's finances were in too parlous a state for reforms to be implemented, and there was also opposition from the Shah, his court, and groups which had profited under the old regime.

Muzaffar al-din Shah died early in 1907/1324h, shortly after signing the Majles's hastily-prepared Constitution. His successor, Muhammad `Ali Shah, was an opponent of the Majles although the man he appointed as prime minister, Amin al-Sultan, took a more conciliatory line. But Amin al-Sultan was assassinated a few months after taking office, as law and order in Tehran began to break down. The Persian armed forces remained under the control of the Shah, and the Majles was reliant on guards drawn from a variety of militia groups, all with their own interests and agendas. The situation continued to deteriorate until the Shah attempted an unsuccessful coup late in 1907/1325h, after which British and Russian intervention temporarily restored order.

In April 1908/1325h the Shah received an ultimatum from other members of the Qajar family: if he persisted in refusing to cooperate with the Majles, they would depose him. Muhammad `Ali responded by withdrawing to a residence a little way outside Tehran, where he summoned and arrested three Qajar princes. The Majles viewed this act as a violation of the Constitution, and militia forces rallied and took up positions in a mosque near the parliament building. Finally, on 23 June 1908 Muhammad `Ali sent twenty men from his Cossack Brigade to arrest some of the Majles's leaders but they were driven back by fire from the mosque. The Shah responded by sending reinforcements under Russian officers, who dislodged the militia from the mosque and bombarded the Majles until it surrendered. Two of those within were executed and the others arrested.

For a while at least, the elected national assembly was abolished and the Shah controlled of Tehran. But popular unrest and opposition to the Shah continued, with Tabriz now a focal point, and the Shah proved no more capable of restoring the country's dire financial state than the Majles had been. Both the British and the Russians began to put Muhammad `Ali Shah under increasing pressure to restore the Constitution. Tabriz, which had been besieged by the Shah's troops, was relieved by Russian soldiers in April 1909/1327h. Revolts broke out in Rasht and Isbahan and revolutionary forces marched on Tehran, which they entered in July. Muhammad `Ali Shah took refuge in the Russian legation. He was formally deposed by a newly-convened Supreme Majles and several of his chief supporters and advisors were executed.

Gold medals of this type were possibly given by Muhammad `Ali Shah to commanders of the Russian forces which bombarded the Majles building on 23 June 1908.

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